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Dishing social media and tech: What is IGTV? - by Diana Perry

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Heard of the term, cord-cutting? It refers to a group of people who have canceled their cable TV subscriptions, aka “cord cutters.” With streaming video on demand across Netflix, Amazon, HBO, Hulu, YouTube, Chromecast, AppleTV, Sling, Roku, Facebook Watch and others which are offered for free, or at a heavily reduced rate for the same content as cable, there’s no wonder cord-cutting is happening. Introducing a new video watching service to add to this list, IGTV – Instagram Television. IGTV is a new app that just rolled out in June by Instagram (though owned by Facebook) with long-form vertical video.

Instagram lately is known as the migration point from Facebook, especially for Millennials, so it makes sense that the platform would fully embrace video, having reached a community of 1 billion users. Traditionally, the network only allowed short videos up to a minute but with IGTV, creators can add video up to a full hour, a total game changer. Anyone with a decent following can create their own “channel” and upload videos where users can like, comment or share the videos. You’ll find IGTV by clicking on the new TV icon in the Instagram app on the home screen to the right of the Instagram logo. It also has its own app. Typically, you’ll find videos here with text, graphics and stickers over the video, making it a little more fun and entertaining. The Gen Z-ers are also watching more video from amateur creators that they can better relate to vs. professional video. IGTV’s main competitor is YouTube, the other big place Gen Z is spending their time. IGTV though does not have commercials...yet anyway. Another big difference here is the vertical format of IGTV, unlike any other video network with dimensions formatted to 1080 x 1920 pixels.

Now that you’ve learned a little about IGTV, the next question to answer is whether or not your business should be jumping on board. One of the great things about utilizing the tool are the notifications. Because the app is new and trying to get off the ground still, Instagram sends push notifications to the top of the Instagram app to your followers showing your company name when you launch a new video. There is also Instagram Live streaming and Instagram Stories, shorter videos that erase after 24 hours. If there is potential for you to do a series, IGTV is where you want to be, especially now with no commercials. So whether you’re looking to inspire, educate or entertain, Instagram is where you want to be, it’s just a matter of which service within the platform is

best for you. My advice is to play around with all of the features and see what resonates best with your target audience. Always be sure to check your Instagram statistics so you can build content appropriately. Happy videoing.

Fun Fact: There is a dedicated website actually called cordcutting.com with guides, news and reviews all about cutting the cable cord.

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